



METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION

Agenda Item 5a

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Memorandum

TO: Legislation Committee

DATE: March 7, 2008

FR: Executive Director

RE: SB 1731 (Yee) — Vehicle Licensing Fee

Description

This bill would allow the Commission to increase the existing \$1 annual vehicle registration fee on vehicles registered within the nine Bay Area counties that support SAFE's operations by one additional dollar, which would generate about \$6 million a year.

Recommendation: Support

Discussion

Approximately 50 percent of all congestion on Bay Area freeways results from accidents, breakdowns or other type of incident. In some highway segments, for example, the I-880 corridor, there is an incident at some point almost every day of the week.

The \$1 fee supports portions of the Call Box and Freeway Service Patrol programs, and provides a local match to qualify for state and federal dollars used to finance regional projects such as the 511 traveler information system, arterial signal coordination, and incident management activities. This fee has been in place and unchanged since 1986.

Adding a second dollar to this fee would not only sustain SAFE's current activities and continue providing the local match that leverages state and federal dollars, but also would provide a small down payment toward implementing MTC's proposed \$600 million freeway performance initiative, which includes a) expanding the Freeway Service Patrol fleet of roving tow trucks; b) completing the system of electronic "loop detectors" needed to monitor freeway conditions; and c) expanding the use of ramp meters on Bay Area freeways. The freeway performance initiative is one of the most cost-effective strategies identified in our long-range plan to reduce congestion and minimize the impact of traffic incidents.

Steve Heminger